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C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 004626

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SUBJECT: KANAGAWA GOVERNOR MEETS WITH AMBASSADOR SCHIEFFER

Classified By: AMBASSADOR J. THOMAS SCHIEFFER. REASON:1.4(B)(D)

#### Summary

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11. (SBU) Ambassador Schieffer confirmed to Kanagawa Governor Matsuzawa on August 14 that there was no conventional alternative to forward deployment of a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier at Yokosuka. When Matsuzawa tried to enlist the Ambassador into seeking GOJ funding for a Kanagawa Prefecture cultural exchange center, the Ambassador, while supporting the concept, made clear that funding was a matter to be decided by the Japanese side. Ambassador Schieffer also deflected the Governor's suggestion that the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) be amended to explicitly cover environmental issues. He emphasized that USFJ personnel and their families, who shared the same air and water with their Japanese neighbors, were committed to being good neighbors when it came to environmental issues. End summary.

#### Setting

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12. (U) Ambassador Schieffer hosted lunch August 14 for Kanagawa Prefectural Governor Shigefumi Matsuzawa. Matsuzawa was accompanied by Deputy Director General of the Policy Planning Bureau, Mitsunori Sato, who is responsible for base issues in Kanagawa.

#### CVN Deployment

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13. (SBU) Governor Matsuzawa noted that the biggest base-related problem in the prefecture had been noise associated with aircraft operations at Atsugi. He welcomed the decision to relocate the carrier air wing to MCAS Iwakuni, characterizing the agreement as the culmination of a 25-year effort. Matsuzawa then raised the issue of forward deployment of a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier at Yokosuka. The governor said he understood the importance of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty and the very large role that the 7th Fleet plays in the bilateral security relationship. When he was a member of the Diet, Matsuzawa observed, he was able to look at the big picture from the national level. Now, however, as a governor representing the people of a prefecture, he had to respond to local concerns.

14. (U) The Ambassador said he understood those concerns and wanted to assure the governor that U.S. nuclear-powered aircraft carriers were perfectly safe. Never in 50 years of service by nuclear-powered U.S. warships had there been a serious incident, nor had there been any problem in hundreds of prior visits to Japan by U.S. nuclear-powered vessels. Ambassador Schieffer pointed out that the United States home-ported CVNs in heavily populated areas such as San Diego and Norfolk, something we would not do if it were not safe. He reiterated that we would do everything necessary to ensure safety in order to relieve people's anxiety, adding that "the more transparent, the better." The Ambassador concluded by urging Governor Matsuzawa to visit San Diego to see first-hand how safety was assured.

15. (SBU) Asked if there were any chance of a conventional aircraft carrier being deployed to Yokosuka, the Ambassador replied, "Zero percent." All conventionally-powered carriers were being eliminated from the fleet, to be replaced by more efficient CVNs. Matsuzawa next asked if the U.S. planned to build any new conventionally powered carriers. "No, all will be nuclear-powered," Ambassador Schieffer replied. The Ambassador observed that North Korea's July 5 missile launches had underscored the importance of the deterrence represented in the U.S.-Japan alliance, and he asked the governor, in his consultations with the local mayors, to emphasize how integral the CVN deployment is to that deterrence.

#### Cultural Exchange Center

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16. (SBU) Turning to the subject of relations between USFJ personnel and their host communities, Gov. Matsuzawa observed that Kanagawa Prefecture was host to 15 major USFJ installations. Compared with Okinawa, Matsuzawa asserted, Kanagawa enjoyed little economic benefit from the bases, as there was little direct relationship between the local economy and the bases. He said that a Kanagawa Prefecture "cultural exchange center" was needed to increase interchange between USFJ personnel and their families and local residents. Ambassador Schieffer said he supported any efforts to foster better relations between U.S. military families and local communities. In response to Matsuzawa's comment that local governments were seeking funding for this purpose from the central government, the Ambassador said that such a decision would be up to the Government of Japan.

#### Environment

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17. (SBU) Governor Matsuzawa turned to environmental issues, saying the strictest laws of the U.S. and Japan should apply both outside and inside U.S. bases. Citing his position as head of the National Governors Association Committee on Base-Hosting Communities, Matsuzawa asked if it would be possible to stipulate environmental provisions in the SOFA. He observed that the SOFA had originally been written 45 years ago, when environmental consciousness was lacking. The Ambassador responded that USFJ shared these concerns on environmental matters and that its personnel, who shared the same water and breathed the same air as people in the surrounding communities, wanted to be good neighbors. He said he would be happy to convey the governor's concern to the U.S. Government, as well as the sincerity with which that concern had been expressed.

#### Comment

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18. (C) The Governor's office called us shortly after the meeting to say how pleased they were with how the meeting had gone. We anticipate, therefore, that in the near future the Governor will make his first official pronouncement accepting the deployment of the CVN USS George Washington.  
SCHIEFFER